



April 20, 2006

The Honorable Michael D. Crapo
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Blanche Lambert Lincoln
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: S. 2110 – the Collaboration for the Recovery of Endangered Species Act

Dear Senator Crapo and Senator Lincoln:

On behalf of America's 3,066 counties I congratulate you for introducing S. 2110 – the Collaboration for the Recovery of Endangered Species Act (CRESA).

Since the enactment of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) more than thirty years ago counties have partnered with the States and the Federal Government, seeking to protect and recover imperiled species. We have had some success – and some failures – and without a doubt we have learned a lot.

Because it incorporates some of the lessons we have learned, we enthusiastically endorse CRESA as an important first step in updating and improving the ESA. First and foremost, CRESA encourages proactive and collaborative approaches to species conservation. It enhances the opportunities for the States to be proactive by extending section six "cooperative agreement" authority to candidate species. It also recognizes, in Title III, the crucial role of private landowners by creating incentives for them to protect habitat and to take measures that contribute to the recovery of species – a concept specifically endorsed in NACO's *American County Platform*.

CRESA also provides, for the first time, a framework for prioritizing listing and recovery actions under the ESA. With ever increasing demands on the Federal Treasury it only makes sense to have a rational basis for deploying scarce resources.

Again, as your local partners in managing our land and water resources for the long-term benefit of all our citizens, America's county officials thank you for your leadership and we urge your colleagues on the Senate Committee on Finance to report on it favorably without delay.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Larry E. Naake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry E. Naake
Executive Director